

Personnel

PROCEDURES TO REQUEST CIVILIAN TUITION ASSISTANCE (TA)

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This instruction establishes procedures on requesting tuition assistance (TA) for all permanent Transportation Working Capital Funds (TWCF)-funded civilian employees who have at least one year of current, continuous civilian service and are assigned to the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). TA for TWCF-funded employees will be funded from the command's TWCF training funds. TA for employees funded from other sources (i.e., General Defense Intelligence Program (GDIP), Operations & Maintenance (O&M), and Health Affairs) will be provided from same funding source as billet and resource managers will certify that funds are available prior to submission for approval to Directorate of Manpower and Personnel (TCJ1) Training and Civilian Personnel Division (TCJ1-C). Employees who are eligible to register in a career program should apply for TA through their respective career program. If the career program denies a TA request, the command's TA program will consider the request on a case-by-case basis. Send comments and suggested improvements to this publication on AF Form 847, Recommendation for Change of Publication, to TCJ1-C. The use of a name or mark of any specific manufacturer, commercial product, commodity, or service in this publication does not imply endorsement by USTRANSCOM.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

Revises cap on tuition assistance from a career-long limit to a fiscal year limit. Includes information on tuition assistance for employees who are funded from other sources (GDIP, O&M, and Health Affairs). Deletes requirement for employee's signature in Block 39 of the DD Form 1556. Revises date for receipt of TA request. Revises Attachment 2. Updates change in office symbols.

1. References, Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Terms. References, related publications, abbreviations, acronyms, and terms used in this instruction are listed in Attachment 1.

2. Authority: USTRANSCOM/TCJ1 is the TA program management authority for USTRANSCOM. TCJ1 establishes the command's overall professional development philosophy, policies, and objectives for civilian personnel. This supports USTRANSCOM Strategic Plan FY1998-FY2017 Strategic Goal 001 *PEOPLE: A trained, ready, top quality Total Force.*

3. Policy Objective:

3.1. The program is designed to benefit the USTRANSCOM mission by providing TA for mission-related courses and to assist USTRANSCOM employees attain their educational goals.

3.2. This program does not apply to training and education mandated by law, regulation, or agency requirement, including mandatory training of civilian acquisition personnel under Department of Defense (DOD) policy.

3.2.1. TA is the partial funding of tuition fees for accredited college and university courses taken on a voluntary off-duty basis. Normally, TA will not be provided for courses at the post-master's level or at a level lower or equal to a degree already attained, unless directly job related.

3.2.2. TA will not be provided, in whole or in part, for courses for which the employee is receiving other federal or state tuition subsidies such as Veterans Administration educational benefits, scholarships, grants, etc.

3.2.3. All courses for which TA is requested must improve individual and organizational performance and assist USTRANSCOM in achieving its mission and performance goals. Mission or job relatedness will be determined by the requesting individual's director or chief, direct reporting element, with final approval by TCJ1.

3.2.4. "Mission-related" expands the definition of training from that which is directly related to "official duties" to courses that improve the skills necessary for effective performance of the USTRANSCOM mission. Mission-related education does not include courses in areas such as religion, art, physical education, music, philosophy, literature, or history. Courses in written and oral communication, business ethics and values, math, and business management, among others, may be appropriate.

3.2.5. TA is authorized at the rate of 75 percent of tuition, laboratory, and other instructional fees required as a condition of enrollment, up to a cap of \$187.50 per semester hour or \$124.50 per quarter hour of the in-state tuition rate. TA will be limited to \$3,500 per fiscal year.

3.2.6. TA will not be provided for non-instructional costs to include, but not limited to, books, materials, examination fees, optional fees, parking, charges for personal services, or the costs of vicinity travel, health insurance, registration, athletic fees, library, food, housing, laundry, etc.

3.2.7. USTRANSCOM will not pay for examination costs or charges related to accrediting work or life experiences. Specifically, TA will not pay for the costs of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), GMAT, GRE, SAT, and ACT examinations or for transfer of credits from another institution.

3.2.8. The Veterans' Educational Assistance Act (38 U.S.C. 3681) prohibits payment of an educational assistance allowance to an employee who is attending training funded by the GETA

and/or whose full salary is paid to them while in training. These employees are subject to GETA regardless of whether the training occurs during or after duty hours.

4. Procedures:

4.1. TA is paid to the employee on a reimbursable basis. Funding is sometimes limited and submission of a request for TA does not mean automatic approval. To apply for TA, the employee submits a DD Form 1556, Request, Authorization, Agreement, Certification of Training and Reimbursement (computer generated), to the immediate supervisor for signature in Block 32 at least 30 days prior to course start date. The director/chief, direct reporting element, signs Block 34 of the DD Form 1556. Block 33 of the DD Form 1556 should be left blank as funds are authorized by TCJ1-C. Employee submits DD Form 1556, along with a photocopy of the school catalog course description, and a signed Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP) Agreement (Attachment 2). DD Form 1556 will be sent to TCJ1-C for review and regulatory compliance. The approved DD Form 1556 will be returned to the employee so they may register for the course. Employee always pays for the course up front and reimbursement will be made within 30 days of completion of the course unless denied for reasons stated in paragraph 4.3.

4.2. TA will be paid only for courses approved by TCJ1-C at least 14 days prior to class start date. If payment is disapproved, employee is responsible for payment of the course.

4.3. To receive reimbursement, the following procedures apply. Employee's failure to comply will result in nonpayment of tuition and the employee will not be considered for USTRANSCOM TA for a period of 1 year. Course(s) must be completed by the date in Block 23b of the DD Form 1556. If circumstances require a deviation from the dates listed, immediately notify TCJ1-C by telephone and in writing (fax/e-mail acceptable). Additionally, any changes to the approved course list must be accomplished in writing to TCJ1-C.

4.4. Employee will submit a Standard Form (SF) 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, to TCJ1-C for reimbursement not later than 30 days after completing the course. Attached to the SF 1164 must be a receipt showing payment, copy of the approved DD Form 1556, and a copy of the grade slip in accordance with grade requirements. SFs 1164 received without required attachments will be returned.

4.5. Employee will pay for any approved course when it is dropped, withdrawn, incomplete, or they do not make a grade of "C" or higher in an undergraduate course, "B" or higher in a graduate course, and satisfactory for courses which have no letter grade.

EDWARD G. PATRICK
Colonel, USAF
Director, Manpower and Personnel

Attachments:

1. Glossary of References and Supporting Information
2. Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP) Agreement

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

References

Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4101-4118)

Veterans' Educational Assistance Act (38 U.S.C. 3681)

USTRANSCOM Policy Directive, 36-17, USTRANSCOM Civilian Tuition Assistance (TA) Program

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-401, Employee Training and Development

HQ USAF/DPD Memorandum, 3 November 1999

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Not used.

Terms

Not used.

CIVILIAN TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CTAP) AGREEMENT

This agreement is administered by the Employee Development Manager/Specialist and applies to all educational assistance for which USTRANSCOM approves payment of tuition, laboratory, and other instructional fees prior to the course start date. Nothing contained in this agreement shall be construed as limiting the authority of the training approval authority to waive, in whole or in part, an obligation of an employee to pay expenses incurred by USTRANSCOM.

1. I am not receiving any other federal or state tuition subsidies such as Veterans' Administration education benefits, scholarships or grants, etc., in whole or in part, where the payment would constitute a duplication of benefits for the course(s) described in the attached request.
2. I agree that no changes will be made in the course(s) or dollar amount(s) described in the attached request without approval. Otherwise, I will pay the difference to USTRANSCOM.
3. I understand that, funds permitting, USTRANSCOM will provide up to 75% tuition, laboratory, and/or other instructional fees required as a condition of enrollment not to exceed \$187.50 per semester hour or \$124.50 per quarter hour and will be limited to \$3,500.00 per fiscal year. I agree to pay the remaining amount and any other costs and fees.
4. I understand that I must successfully complete the course(s) for which tuition assistance is approved. Successful completion requires a grade of "C" or better for undergraduate courses, a grade of "B" or better for graduate courses, and "satisfactory" for courses that have no letter grade. I hereby authorize the release of academic information (course grades, completion status) by the academic institution to USTRANSCOM, and I agree to provide a copy of the grade report to USTRANSCOM.
5. I will pay the academic institution and, upon successful completion of the course(s), submit a completed SF 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, to the respective Career Program or servicing Training Office for reimbursement of the approved tuition.
6. I understand that employer-provided tuition assistance for courses not related to my current job or occupation may be considered taxable income.
7. I understand that no claim for reimbursement can be submitted to USTRANSCOM if I leave the command before completion of approved course for tuition assistance.

Employee Signature

Date

